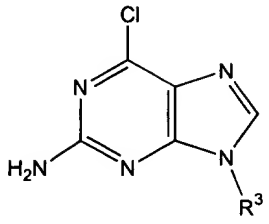
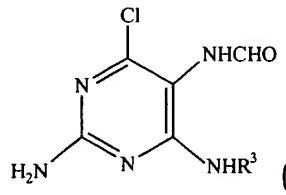
Claim 9 (amended four times) A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (VII)



(VII)

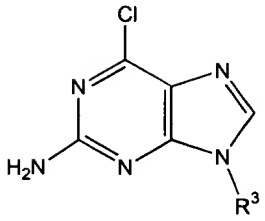
wherein R^3 is hydrogen; hydroxyl or a protected hydroxyl; a C_{3-7} carbocyclic group optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; [an acyclic group] a C_{2-8} hydrocarbyl group, wherein carbon atoms may be substituted by one or more [heteroatoms] N, O or S atoms, and wherein such [acyclic] C_{2-8} hydrocarbyl group may be optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; or a C_{4-7} heterocyclic group, wherein at least one carbon atom is replaced by a N, O, or S atom and wherein such C_{4-7} heterocyclic group may be optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; provided that such groups are not attached by a glycosidic bond, comprising reacting a compound of formula (VI)



(VI)

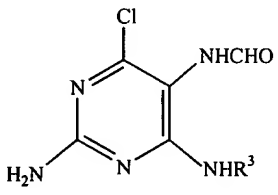
wherein R^3 is as defined above, with a trialkylorthoformate in the presence of an aqueous acid.

18. (Twice Amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (VII)



(VII)

wherein R^3 is hydrogen; hydroxyl or a protected hydroxyl; a C_{3-7} carbocyclic group optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl,or halogen; [an acyclic group] a C_{2-8} hydrocarbyl group, wherein carbon atoms may be substituted by one or more [heteroatoms] N, O or S atoms, and wherein such [acyclic] C_{2-8} hydrocarbyl group may be optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; or a C_{4-7} heterocyclic group, wherein at least one carbon atom is replaced by a N, O, or S atom and wherein such C_{4-7} heterocyclic group may be optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; provided that such groups are not attached by a glycosidic bond, comprising reacting a compound of formula (VI)



(VI)

wherein R^3 is as defined above, with a trialkylorthoformate in the presence of an aqueous acid.

In Claim 22, line 4, please delete "heteroatoms" and substitute --N, O, or S atoms--therefor.